

LET'S GET WASHINGTON COVERED:Restructuring Health Insurance Task Force
May 28, 2003 meeting
1:30 – 4:30pm, DoubleTree Hotel, SeaTac, Wash.

In attendance: Commissioner Mike Kreidler

Representing Consumers: Adair Dammann, Washington State Council, Service Employees International Union; Tom Jones, Community Choice Healthcare Network; Ed Singler, AARP; Barbara Flye, Washington Citizen Action Council

Representing Insurers: Pam MacEwen, Group Health Cooperative; Yori Milo, Premera Blue Cross

Representing Providers: Lori Bielinski, Complementary and Alternative Medicine; Rhonda Hauff, Yakima Neighborhood Health Services

Representing Purchasers: Laura Boyd, Health Care Purchasers and Association of Washington Business; Pete Cutler, Health Care Authority; Cynthia Voortman, Washington Association of Health Underwriters; Carolyn Logue, National Federation of Independent Business; Paul Tucker, Highline Community Hospital

OIC: Michael Arnis, Ann Eddy, Valerie Gerst, Sandi Peck, Bill Ripple, George Xu

ABSENT: Thomas Curry, Washington State Medical Association, Gary Smith, Independent Business Association, Margaret Stanley, Regence Blue Shield

The Commissioner introduced the new member of the task force, Paul Tucker, Administrator from Highline Community Hospital. He will be representing the Washington State Hospital Association.

Minutes of April 23, 2003 meeting were approved.

COMPUTER MODELING SYSTEM

Michael Arnis introduced John Sheils from the Lewin Group. The Lewin Group has been contracted by OIC to develop a computer model that will simulate the impact of health policy on spending for stakeholder groups. The task force will be able to use the system to test how their suggested changes to our current health insurance system would affect various groups.

WHAT IS WORKING IN WASHINGTON STATE

Commissioner Kreidler presented a power point presentation on what he sees are the problems with our current health insurance system and why it's so important that this task force works to find a solution. A major part of that solution must be how to cover the uninsured. The uninsured have limited access to preventive health care and affect all of us by using the emergency rooms at hospitals when they become very sick. Among the hospitals, uncompensated care is unevenly spread. Many of the uninsured are employed and others are chronically uninsured. With the cuts to BHP in the new state budget, there will be even more uninsured. He asked the task force to find a middle ground in its solutions.

He was asked by a task force member to define who the uninsured are and if the numbers are static. The task force members asked about how long individuals remained uninsured in Washington State.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS FROM TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Each member in attendance discussed the 3 problems they see in our health care system and they also discussed one element that is working well in our system.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Michael Arnis will work on a set of guiding principles and send them to the members before the next meeting. The task force will discuss the principles and seek consensus at the next meeting. These broad principles will guide and challenge the group.

Task force members requested more information about the Lewin computer model so they can feel more comfortable with it.

They also expressed concern with the development of an option by the August 20 meeting. They felt that was too soon in their process.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted, Valerie Gerst